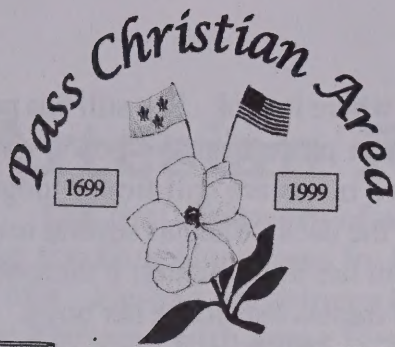




Colonization Tricentennial
Committee

Pass Christian, Mississippi

The

Tricentennial

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Seafood Fest '99

General Chairman Don Rafferty's statement that his "plate is full" with so much going on for the St. Paul Seafood Festival this weekend is very true. However, everyone attending any of the 3-day festival will also have more than a "Full-Plate." Not just with food, but with everything else on the active agenda of events and festivities. Eight live bands are scheduled to perform over the 3-day playbill. For the sports minded a 5-K Run, a 1-K Walk, and a Tennis Tournament. For entertainment, besides the live bands, a Dance Review, and Fireworks. For those who want to know all about "The Pass", attend the "Party in the Pass" sessions with celebrity oral histories, and "Reenactments" sponsored by the Tricentennial Committee. And, not to forget the politicians, there will be an "Ol' Fashion" political rally.

Don't miss the opening ceremonies which begin Friday at 5:30 p.m. followed by the first celebrity heritage presentations on the Pass's 300 years. Music, food, and fireworks to follow.

Saturday schedules fun, food, and music all day long.

Sunday starts at noon, then with live music, 2 p.m. Reenactments, more music, a fantastic political rally, more music and the Big Raffle at 9 p.m.

Seafood, Gumbo, Hamburgers, Po-Boys, Stuffed Potatoes, Egg Rolls, Candy and Sweets, Beer and Beverages, Games and Rides, and Raffles and T-Shirts, will be available every day in addition to the fun-to-watch Dunking Booth.



The Ruth

by Russell Barnes, Maritime Historian

There is a schooner still at work in Pass Christian, although she is nearly a hundred years old, her name has been changed, and she no longer looks the same as she did in her youth. The boat's current name is *Instigator*. She has recently worked out of the Pass Christian harbor as a commercial fishing vessel. Her story began at DeLisle, in 1901.

Originally named *Ruth*, she was built as a two-masted, gaffed-rigged centerboard schooner for John Olsen, then a local merchant who owned several fishing and freighting schooners. The *Ruth* was the first of four Biloxi-style fishing schooners built at DeLisle for Olsen. She is of an average size for a local fishing schooner, measuring 47.6 feet in length, 17 feet in breadth, and 3.1 feet depth of hold.

(Continued Next Page)

One of the most interesting chapters in the *Ruth's* career opened when she was sold in 1903 to Louis Trocheset of Biloxi. In late August 1903, she sailed into the annals of Biloxi labor history in a rather dubious fashion. Earlier that week, with Biloxi's Oystermen's Protective Association on strike, several non-union fishermen went to the Lopez Canning Factory and asked to take the schooner *Julia L.* out to fish for shrimp. These men needed to work to make money to support their families.

On the night of August 30, 1903, the *Julia L.* was at anchor near Brush Island in the Louisiana marsh when the schooner *Ruth*, under the command of Louis Trocheset, came along side and demanded the *Julia L.*'s crew to return to port and respect the union's strike. Although no overt threats were made, they were told that if they did not obey, there would be "trouble," which the *Julia L.*'s crew took to mean violence.

The next day, the *Julia L.* reported the incident to the local newspaper. The day after the newspaper report, the Oystermen's Protective Association, under public pressure and having lost what little public support they had, voted to go back to work without gaining any concessions. The fishermen, through a rash act of bravado, had undermined their own weak bargaining position with the canneries, and the schooner had been forever linked with one of the darkest moments in the history of Biloxi's seafood industry.

The *Ruth* has had several name changes in her life. In 1928, her name was changed to *Calli M.*, a name she held for over 50 years. In 1983, her name was changed to *Shark*. In 1989, it was changed to *Miss Stacey*, and in 1995, she was known as *Papa Smurf*. As of 1996, her name is *Instigator*.

The *Ruth* has spent her entire career fishing the local waters. She has been owned by individuals as well as by established seafood companies. Although her best days are behind her, she still looks every bit the fishing schooner to

those who know where to look. She still has part of her old bowsprit in place near the bows, and the stumps of her two masts are still firmly lodged in their steps under the deck. She has several original framing timbers in her hull, including three sets of true cantilevered frames that shape her bows. Such framing is of a very old style and not used much in the last 50 years. She is indeed a living piece of Coast maritime history.

In order to preserve her design for future study, a haul out has been arranged for the early summer during which time she will be measured, photographed, and studied. A set of plans will be produced from this study. These plans will ensure that future generations of historians will have access to a rare and compelling bit of maritime history. Historian Russell Barnes is working in conjunction with the vessel's owner and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Maritime Museum at Madisonville, LA to make this project a reality.

Crossroads of the Heart

The Pass Christian Public Library is hosting a bit of Mississippiana which is a traveling exhibit that explores the wide range of traditional art forms found throughout the state. Developed and sponsored by the Mississippi Arts Commission, the exhibit features five central themes: maritime traditions, handmade objects, music, quilting, and the oral tradition which are displayed on six self-standing panels and a pair of free-standing pedestals with accompanying information on each of the stated themes that are highlighted with photographs, text, and examples of objects created by the featured artists.

A touch-screen computer kiosk provides further information on the specific artists and craftspeople who carry on the traditions featured. The exhibit will remain on display until August 13. Groups are also invited by prior arrangement during regular library hours. For tour information, call 452-4596.

Artesian Flows

The first discovery of artesian water along the Gulf Coast was by John T. Hardie in 1884. He had machinery brought down from Alabama with some Negro laborers who were experienced with the hand operated equipment. At a depth of 550 feet they struck water which flowed from the 1½ inch pipe.

Realizing the significance of this performance, the Sutters bought machinery that was horse operated and John Sutter bored their first well on the Edward Connery place on the East End of the Pass, which was known as the Legendre place in the early 1900s.

After drilling hundreds of wells, John Sutter had found that there were multiple levels of strata that were found at 5, 7, 9, and 12 hundred floor depths. Pipe diameters ranged from 2 to 8 inches in order to provide various quantities of water pressure and gallon output. Some 4-inch wells produced 450 gallons per minute, 12,960 barrels every 24-hours.

All the important residences, schools, hotels, and public buildings had their individual deep flowing wells.

Prior to artesian water discovery, water was attained from cisterns and shallow ponds which collected water from rain water coursing from roof tops. This provided major breeding conditions for the yellow fever mosquito, *Anopheles*. In the late 1800s and the 1900s, Pass Christian and other communities became health resorts as a place of respite from other areas of the country.

Throughout the coast, well water is still the major source of water supply. Many of the free-flowing wells have either dried up or have been capped. One of these

was the main source of community supply following Hurricane Camille. It was located at the NW corner of Henderson Avenue and North Street. Through the years, some people have suggested that the John T. Hardie residence or well-site should be nominated for an historic marker to memorialize the significance of his discovery.

150 Years Ago

Who wants to sit down and read census records? Not many people would find it very interesting, but as a source for research it is necessary. Pass Christian in the 1850s must have been an exciting town with a youthful, vibrant population of about 800 full-time residents, half and half, Black and white. In addition to the local residences, there were 40-odd houses along the beach that were lived in during weekends and summer months by the owners from New Orleans. Each house and business establishment had piers running out into the Sound numbering about 100.

For transients, there were three boarding houses and one large hostelry called the Pass Christian Hotel which was owned and operated by R.H. Montgomery and his wife, Allison. They were in their mid-30s, having originated from Scotland. To serve the large numbers of hotel guests who arrived by steamers from New Orleans, the hotel's staff of 44, consisted of waiters, chamber maids, cooks and kitchen helpers who lived on the premises and had been imported primarily from Ireland.

To travel throughout the city, a horse and buggy was available for hire to drive along Front Street; or Davis, Market, or Back Road (Second Street). For out-of-

town visitors, there were saloons, pool halls, and bordellos. And, there were the professionals and merchants of the community. John Nelson, 34, was a florist from England. Author O'Neal, 24, a shoemaker from Ireland. George and Hannah Brandt, 30, from Germany. 30-year-old John Knost, a shoemaker from Prussia. Madden Stroup, 28, a baker from Germany.

Locally born Pierre Saucier, age 45, a merchant, real estate developer, and public official, built the large home on Beach Boulevard now called the "*Union Quarters*." John Bordages, a 26-year-old merchant from France married Pierre Saucier's sister, Maria. He operated a store next to Pierre's home. Other persons having been in the area for at least 15 years were: John Henderson, Sr. and his wife, Louisa, and Julia, and Elliot; and his first son, John Jr., age-32, was a law partner with 40-year-old attorney, William Champlin from Connecticut. New Yorker Finley B. Hiern was 39 and had been the first mayor. From Maryland, physician William Calvert was very active in land sales. John Brill, 47, was a tobacconist from Ireland. He built one of the first shopping centers along the west side of Market Street from where he operated the wharf extending out from the "Market House." The Davis's, Benjamin and Larned also made their mark. Native born mulattos having substantial residents on Front Street were Rosalie Benoit and Carmelite Noel. They were heirs of Charles Asmard, a freed Negro slave who was deeded all of downtown Pass Christian.

Others were William Manders, a 36-year-old bar-keep from Ireland; and Charles Atkinson, 44, a dentist; and T.H. Duncan, 40, a shop-keeper from Pennsylvania; and Theodule Dubuisson, 37, a carpenter from

Slidell.

There were oystermen from Spain and Mexico, fishermen from Greece and Italy, sailmakers from Ireland, boatbuilders, grocers, plasterers, masons, carpenters, tailors, cabinet makers, painters, brick layers, blacksmiths, and gardeners. And remaining shipboard while moored at Henderson Point, were 23 sailors and mariners who hailed mostly from New England states. They were stationed aboard the U.S. Revenue Cutter "*Duane*."

The first Catholic Church had been built in 1844 and another replaced it in 1851. To take charge of the Episcopal Church was Thomas Savage, 45, from Connecticut. The birthplaces of his children show that he had served in West Africa and Alabama before arriving in Pass Christian. Another Episcopal clergyman was R.G. Hayes, 40, from Pennsylvania.



Lighthouse Master Mistress

With an imbued willingness to serve and to "be there when it counts" is one of the many traits of Mary Catherine Ward. Having served her community and her church for many years, she once again demonstrates her desire to see things happen by being active on the Board of Directors of the Tricentennial Committee and by taking the next step without being asked, Mary Catherine has made a significant donation to the funding of the Lighthouse project. **Our thanks to Mary Catherine Ward and Robert Pundsack for getting the ball rolling for this great heritage project.**

The Trail of Tears

by Betty Carlin

The Indian Removal Act was signed by President Andrew Jackson in 1830. Tribes east of the Mississippi ceded their lands for territory in the West. These included the Choctaws and Chickasaws of Mississippi. The Creeks signed another treaty stating that no Indians would be forced to move but could go or stay as they chose. However, four years later they were forced to leave their homes.

In 1837, a group of Creeks on their way West stopped for five months in Pass Christian. One of their leaders was Chief Tuskina. It is interesting to note that a deed of land given by John Henderson to his daughter Julia in 1847, lists "Chief Tuskina's Cabin" as one of the points of reference. It is believed this would have been located on land that is now north of the railroad and east of Cedar Avenue.

Chief Sam Moniac, another Creek leader whose wife was a sister of William "The Red Eagle" Weatherford, died while the tribe was in the Pass and was buried here. The location of his grave is unknown.

A book was published in 1991, called "William Weatherford: His Country and His People" by Lynn Hasty Thompson which mentions Sam Moniac and his death in Pass Christian.

At least four people from out of state have been trying to find where he is buried during this past year (1994).

It is strange to think that a town on the Coast could have been a way-station on the infamous "Trail of Tears." It is hoped that more information about the brief moment in our history will be found as well as the grave of Chief Moniac.

Betty Carlin is the archivist for the Pass Christian Historical Society. This article is reprinted from the May 1994 issue of The Pass Christian Review.

Woodland Cottage

by James M. Currie

The family home at 1020 West Beach Boulevard, known as *Woodland Cottage*, was built by Charles R. Currie in 1923. He was born in Scotland and migrated by way of Chicago to New Orleans where he established the Pontchartrain Lumber Co. In deciding to build a new home, the lumber and carpenters were sent from New Orleans. The still standing, small outbuilding was built first in order to allow Charles a place to stay while the main house was being constructed. The original cottage had a symmetrical floor plan with two bedrooms and a bath on each side; centered by a living room and dining room. As the fashion in those days, a large screened porch fronted the house and the kitchen was an extension from the east bedrooms.

Upon completion, the Curries with their son James R. made permanent residence there as Charles commuted by train to attend business. Following his wife's death in 1940, he and his son moved to New Orleans and rented the cottage to the Tessier family for a number of years.

In 1961, James R. returned to the Pass with his wife Helen and three boys and rendered some modifications.

Recently, in 1997, James M. and his wife Laura and three children took residential possession in spite of limitations with four bedrooms contained within 2,000 square feet. It was soon realized that the quarters needed expansion. By extending to the rear of the property with a new bedroom wing, the main house was refitted with a spacious living room and library in addition to accommodating a grand courtyard contiguous to the dining room.

Mindful of preserving the heritage of the beautiful home, the original superior wood quality was quickly noted. A major challenge was renewing the plaster on the inside walls and ceilings. The lath system seems to be a proprietary system designed by Charles. Instead

of the normal strips of wood with spaces between, the laths are one by six cypress boards that are shiplapped together. In the middle of the board and at the shiplaps is a dovetail which is a groove wider at the back than at the front that holds the plaster. The overall effect is a solid wooden wall with dovetailed plaster keys every couple of inches apart. Needless to say, the process has endured even the rigors of Camille.

The living room fireplace had been altered during the 1961 renovation, but its opposite mate in the adjoining bedroom had not been changed. Therefore, the altered fireplace was restored to its original appearance by using the unaltered one as a model. All additions and alterations have adhered to the same style as the original architecture and makes us now realize why the undertaking was at first with great trepidation.

Frog Nonsense

What a wonderful bird the frog are.
When he stand - he sit, almost.
When he hop - he fly, almost.
He ain't got no since - hardly.
He ain't got no tail - hardly, either.
When he sit,
He sit on what he ain't got, almost.

Great Reading!

For a wonderful easy reading adventure in reliving and gaining a sense for the times and rigors of the early French settlers, novels by Placide "Don" Nicaise is a must. His first novel reflects the first generation who settled at Old Biloxi and Mobile. The second novel emphasizes the second generation who in growing up also travel to New Orleans. The next novel not yet announced will have to be about these same families who first settled at Bay St. Louis and at DeLisle (Wolftown).

Lafrénière Park

Nicholas Chauvin de Lafrénière was the chief coordinator of the political faction that conspired to keep Louisiana under French control in 1783.

His Canadian father, one of four brothers who were in the vanguard with Bienville, raised large families and established their plantations just south of the Vieux Carré. At that time, those who accumulated wealth and land, appended suffix names as in the case of Chauvin *de Lafrénière*. On their plantations, they cultivated rice and indigo and raised cattle. One of the family homes was noted as being the first recorded country residences in the Mississippi Valley built of brick.

The young Lafrénière received his advanced education in France. Because of his majestic appearance he was nicknamed "*Louis Quatorze*" (Louis XIV). He was passionate, domineering, a lover of costly pleasures, but sustained himself as a libertarian with a combination of an aristocrat and a populist.

On returning from Paris he was appointed by the Throne, to the highly regarded position of Attorney General for the colony. The appointment arrived on Jan 1, 1763, just following the French secret cession of Louisiana to Spain and before the Treaty of Paris with the English. With the turnover, as Attorney General, Lafreniere confiscated all the Jesuit Order's properties.

He became the most effective voice in the Superior Council, thereby thwarting much of what the new Spanish governor, Don Antonio de Ulloa, wanted accomplished. The debates continued to flaunt Spanish authority without Spain's intervention.

Unchallenged, the French Loyalist Clan held secret meetings at the country estate of Madame Alexandrine Pradel.

The clandestine group decided to revolt against Ulloa with Villere's militia in support.

During the night of October 27, 1767, volunteers spiked the cannons that guarded the southern wall gates at Tchoupitoulas. A large group entered the city and gathered at Lafrénière's call to petition for the expulsion of Spanish Governor Ulloa and the restoration of French rule. The petition was signed by 500 citizens. The next day this was followed with the drafting of a Resolution demanding a Declaration of Freedom from Spanish rule which was a foretaste of the American and French Revolutions which would soon happen.

Ulloa fled to Cuba where he wrote to the Spanish Throne in Madrid, calling Lafrénière a "Turbulent Spirit," and claimed that the petition that expelled him, "bears the stamp of Lafrénière's style . . . of arrogance and insolence."

This was the first opportunity for an independent Port of New Orleans, but Lafrénière allowed Aubrey to return to command, rather than establishing himself in control.

It was almost a year later, on July 24, 1769, that 24 Spanish ships of war carrying 2,056 troops commanded by Gen. Alexander O'Reily arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

Following O'Reily's peaceful entry to the City and the lowering of the French Flag while raising the Spanish Banner went unchallenged. A week later, he called for the arrest of 12 of the leaders including Lafrénière.

At 3:00 p.m. on October 25, 1769, at the northeast corner of the Place d'Armes (Jackson Square) at St. Ann and Decatur Streets five of the dozen men were pinioned together. They refused to be blindfolded. As the volley of shots from the Spanish firing squad were dispensed, the voice of Lafrénière shouted out, "I am French! The cry of liberty has been heard!"

At New Orleans was the first European colony to challenge the "old order."

Seven years later the American Revolution took place.

Heritage Exhibits

The d'Iberville Bronze Bust which was sculptured and donated to the Tricentennial Committee by Michelle Smith has been making the rounds of the community as well as the Lighthouse Model Exhibit created by Buddy Diboll.

In addition to donors of all exhibit items, a big applause is extended to Virgil Harris, who has moved the 75-pound Bronze bust to more than 25 locations. And, to Buddy Diboll, having moved the hefty Lighthouse to at least 15 locations including the Biloxi/Gulfport Airport. And, to Dayton Robinson, who has furled and unfurled the 13 flags that are part of Pass Christian's 300 year history -- We give Thanks!

Editorial Department

Dan Ellis 452-3138

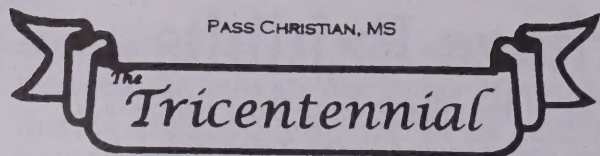
Dayton Robinson 452-4543

The Pass Christian Area Colonization Tricentennial Committee, POB 354, PCMS will change its name **effective January 2000**. It will be chartered under the name of **Pass Christian Lighthouse Society**.

Founding Charter memberships will be solicited starting with the next issue of this Tricentennial Newsletter which will go out of existence with the final release in December 1999. We thank the nearly 300 individuals, families, businesses, and organizations who mailed in \$15 or more to defray the costs of printing and mailing to about 900 recipients in the course of nearly a two year period.

There are more events scheduled by the Tricentennial Committee, the Board of Directors meets the third Tuesday of each month at City Hall at 10 a.m. Everyone is invited to sit in on these meetings.

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